

Resequencing Training for More Battle Focus: The Transformation of 19D OSUT

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In recent months, there has been much talk throughout the Army about changing the entry-level training of our Soldiers. Proposed modifications to make training more realistic and more battle focused primarily center on increasing the length of the entry-level training and increasing the skill set imparted to Soldiers, such as training them not only on fundamentals of fire and maneuver but on urban operations as well. Many of these proposed modifications are steps in the right direction and are long overdue. Unfortunately, many of these modifications require additional resources not yet available. These proposed changes require extensive staffing to determine the impact that drawing on these resources, such as training ammunition, will have on combat operations. It may be some time before any of these changes are made.

So what about the near term? Without additional resources, is it possible to train entry-level Soldiers to standard and prepare them for combat? We believe it is possible and the short-term solution focuses on commanders resequencing training to make it more efficient, more realistic, and more battle focused. This process is already underway at the 1st Armor Training Brigade. The 5th Squadron, 15th Cavalry Regiment (5-15), has the initial entry-training mission for military occupational skill (MOS) 19D Cavalry Scouts. In recent months, 5-15 Cavalry has resequenced and improved training in 19D one-station unit training (OSUT) to ensure the right Soldier with the right skills is sent to the Cavalry Force.

Resequencing training was not done haphazardly and required extensive staffing at squadron, brigade, and post levels to determine the feasibility of each proposal. The first step in resequencing training was prioritizing the tasks trained. There are 176 tasks trained in 19D OSUT, 126 of which are directly related to combat. Given the limited time available to train scouts (16 weeks) we obtained input from all senior officers and noncommissioned officers in the squadron regarding the importance of these tasks. We studied after-



action reviews from recent combat operations and results of the most recent field surveys. Given all of these factors, we prioritized our tasks into “master, know, familiarize” categories.

Prioritizing the tasks trained has allowed 5-15 Cavalry to reevaluate and resequence its master training schedule used for each new scout class. The new master training schedule trains the same tasks as before, but resequences the training to allow our cadre to train important skills up front and reinforce these skills throughout OSUT. Resequencing training into logical progression has led to many improvements in 19D OSUT.

One such improvement is training early the fundamentals of patrolling (week 3 instead of week 12). Training early the fundamentals of patrolling and assembly area procedures allows those critical 19D skills to be reinforced throughout the training cycle. Basic rifle marksmanship has been rescheduled to occur later in the cycle and over a longer period of time to provide more time for reinforcement training. Burst fire, night fire, and nuclear, biological, and chemical fire now occur in week 13, so that week 3 will not be the last time a scout fires his individual weapon before graduation.

Another improvement made possible by rescheduling is creating additional field time for scouts. This additional time for situational training exercises (STX) and field training exercises (FTX) is made possible by combining many events that were previously conducted in an “admin” environment at the barracks or in the motor pool. 19Ds now spend over 23 nights

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in the field during OSUT, a significant increase over the 7 nights previously allocated by the program of instruction (POI). Time allocated for reinforcement training for end-of-phase tests is now combined with time provided for the test to create a 2- or 3-day block of time for commanders to develop the end-of-phase test into an FTX. The events formerly known as STX, CAV stakes, and gunnery have now become an end-of-cycle FTX, lasting 7 days and 6 nights.

When prioritizing and resequencing training, we also created additional training time to reinforce combat critical skills by removing time allocated for training that was not essential. For example, by eliminating 4 hours of time allocated to train antitank mines (which scouts seldom emplace), we have added 4 additional hours of call for fire training. Another example is making a 4-hour block of instruction to train “communication using visual signals while mounted,” an enabling objective under the terrain drive lesson. This increases the amount of time each Soldier spends driving a HMMWV and M3 to 1.5 hours — double what it has been in the past. The emphasis is now placed on driving — over terrain and at night — rather than on simply driving laps around a driving course or in a classroom learning visual signals.

While resequencing training pays many dividends, it is still only an interim solution to how we really want to train the future cavalry scout. We have added training the fundamentals of urban combat skills and traffic control point operations, but these additional tasks are not properly resourced in terms of land and ammunition, making it more of a challenge to train Soldiers realistically. Nonetheless, rescheduling training in a logical progression is a powerful tool that commanders can use to improve the training of entry-level Soldiers while awaiting allocation of additional resources for training.

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